

also served on the Board of Directors of the Union Bank of St. Clair County for 25 years.

Dr. West was an active member and leader in the Republican Party and was viewed by many as the foremost authority on the Republican Party in southwestern Illinois. He served as chairman of the St. Clair County Republican Century Club for more than 25 years, elected as a delegate at seven Republican National Conventions, and was an Elector in the Electoral College for three presidential elections. He was very active in local, State, and national politics and hosted prominent politicians at St. Clair County events. He was proud to have attended the inaugurations of many presidents and governors and was a frequent guest at the Governor's Mansion and the White House.

Dr. West wrote for medical research journals and was a professor at Southern Illinois University School of Medicine, Washington University School of Medicine, and Barnes Hospital. Dr. West is the namesake and past recipient of the St. Clair County Medical Society's Wilson H. West Award for service in the health care profession. He was honored as an "outstanding alumnus" by the St. Louis University School of Medicine. In 1966, he received the Everett Dirksen Award and subsequently established a Nursing Scholarship with the same organization. In 2002, Dr. West was awarded the prestigious Eisenhower Commission. He was awarded lifetime membership on the Republican National Committee, the honorary organizations, Republican Speaker's Circle, and the Presidents Club.

Dr. West leaves a legacy to his patients of 60 years of service with dedicated professionalism and compassionate care. He touched many lives with his understanding, care, and concern. He provided outstanding treatment and service to three generations of southwestern Illinoisans.

My thoughts and prayers will be with the family and friends of Dr. Wilson West.

TRIBUTE TO BEECHIE BROOKS

HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2007

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize a community leader and real estate and economic development visionary of the 4th Congressional District, Beechie Brooks.

Beechie Brooks' vision was instrumental in revitalizing and changing the character of neighborhoods in Milwaukee's central city by developing the Halyard Park subdivision. The United Realty Group, a firm that was formed from the merger of several African American real estate companies in 1976, gained approval from the City of Milwaukee's Redevelopment Authority to develop a subdivision of single-family suburban style homes. Mr. Brooks' leadership was integral to creating this "model" of privately financed housing in the central city that continues to draw the attention of people in urban areas around the country. It serves as a testament to the fact that central cities can provide the same quality of life as suburbs.

Beechie Brooks did not rest on his laurels but continued to spearhead development in

the community including: assisted in the development of the Northtown Shopping Center on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive and North Avenue which has been renamed Brooks Plaza in his honor; designed and built Brook's X-Press Car Washing Plant on 7th Street and W. North Avenue; oversaw the development of the Masterpiece Supper Club and Motor Lodge on 6th and W. Walnut Streets; and was a founder and treasurer of the state's second oldest African American-owned financial institution, the North Milwaukee State Bank. Mr. Brooks also served on the City of Milwaukee's Board of Assessment, the Wisconsin Real Estate License Examining Board and the NAACP Milwaukee Chapter's Executive Board and chaired their Housing Committee.

Mr. Brooks was devoted to his wife of 58 years, Vernadine who passed away in 2004. They were both active members of St. Mark AME Church. He was instrumental in planning and constructing the building the church currently occupies and continues to serve on St. Mark's Trustee Board that manages the church's real estate holdings. Mr. Brooks is also a member of the Anvil Housing Board which manages the church's two senior citizen housing complexes.

I am honored to have this opportunity to pay tribute to Beechie Brooks for his unwavering commitment to making Milwaukee a great place to live and work.

PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYER-EMPLOYEE COOPERATION ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 17, 2007

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 980, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act of 2007. This vital legislation will provide police officers, firefighters, and other public safety officers with basic collective bargaining rights, without undermining state authority or existing state laws—providing modest minimum standards to be included in state laws.

Sadly, some members of this body object to H.R. 980 on the grounds that it supposedly "tramples on state's rights." This could not be further from the truth. The Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act only requires that states and localities have a bargaining process, it does not mandate binding arbitration, it does not allow strikes, and local employers still retain the final say in all budgetary decisions. Furthermore, most states and localities already meet or exceed the bill's minimum requirement of having a process in place that allows police, firefighters and others sit down and talk about their jobs with their employers. For these reasons, it seems to me that the state's rights objections raised by the bill's opponents do not stand up under scrutiny.

Congress has long recognized the benefits of a cooperative working relationship between labor and management. Over the years we have extended collective bargaining rights to letter carriers, postal clerks, public transit employees, and even Congressional employees. It is long past time that we allow public safety

employees the basic right to bargain collectively and raise workplace and public safety issues with their employers and in passing H.R. 980 today we will correct this wrong.

TRIBUTE TO THE SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY OF EDWARDSVILLE COUGARS SOFTBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2007

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor my alma mater Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville, where I graduated with my MBA in 1997, on winning its first national NCAA Division II softball championship.

The fifth ranked Cougars (49–8) closed out the season with a 16-game winning streak. The 3-hour and 15 minute game was the longest in Division II championship history.

Ashley Price hit an RBI single in the 12th inning to give SIUE a 3–2 championship victory over defending national champion Lock Haven at Firestone Stadium in Akron, OH. The national championship is the 17th in the school's history and first in softball.

Members of the team include Ashley Price, Chaleen Rumpf, Carly Wildenradt, Emily Lenart, Courtney Mall, Lindsey Laas, Haylee Eubanks, Abbie Bates, Katy Biggs, Nicole Beecher, Lauren Zembruski, Sabra McCune, Amanda Puce, Jodie Ohlau, Kaeleigh Rousey, Libby Lenart, Mallory Ruggles and Kaitlin Colosimo. The Head Coach is Sandy Montgomery; Valerie McCoy is the Assistant Coach, and the Student Assistant is Shannon Evans.

I am very pleased to congratulate the softball team of Southern Illinois University of Edwardsville on their national championship and wish them the best of luck for next season.

RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANT TESTIMONY OF MR. CHARLES DAHAN BEFORE THE CONGRESSIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CAUCUS

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, on Wednesday, June 20, 2007, the Congressional Human Rights Caucus held an extraordinary briefing on Morocco's progress toward gender equality.

The briefing addressed the very important issue of women's rights in Morocco that has been the number one priority of King Mohammed VI. The Moudawana (the Family Law), adopted in 2003, has sought to raise women's status as full partners with men, in order to uphold equality between the two spouses and to protect children's rights. Women are now able to initiate divorce and to gain custody of their children. Polygamy has become practically impossible.

Madam Speaker, Mr. Charles Dahan, the World Vice President of the Federation of the Moroccan Jewry, shared his exceptional

knowledge of women's rights in Morocco. Mr. Dahan's speech was not only eloquent but tremendously important in educating the Members and their staff on this issue.

I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking Mr. Dahan for sharing with so many prominent leaders his expertise. With that I would like to place Mr. Dahan's testimony in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

MOROCCO, PROGRESS TOWARD EQUALITY

(By Charles Dahan)

Thank you for inviting me to visit with you about Jews in Morocco today. Let me start with a brief overview of how the Jews came to settle in Morocco.

Two major groups of migration:

1. 3-400 BC Destruction of the Temple. Jews crossed Egypt and settled in the Berber region of what is now Libya and Morocco. These Jews are referred to in Hebrew as "Tochavim". At this time, the Berbers had no organized religion and the Jews lived their Jewish life coexisting with the tribes and, on occasion, conversions would occur. In the 1300s, Islam was introduced in Morocco and most Berbers converted to Islam.

2. 1490s Spanish Inquisition. Both Muslims and Jews were forced out of Spain and settled in Northern Africa. This was a shared historical experience. These Jews are called "Mekorachim" in Hebrew and they numbered between 25-30,000.

There were several important moments where the Jewish contribution to Moroccan life was recognized and, therefore, protected by the Sultans. Two examples are:

We see the creation of "Mellahs" during the 1600s. Jews were considered "dhimmis" (literally, protected persons) at this time by the Sultan. Original purpose of mellahs was to protect Jewish communities. Mellahs developed center of services for royal authority like duties, minting coins, diplomacy, and royal merchants.

In the 1800s, Sir Moses Montefiore met with Sultan Ridi Muhammad b. 'Abd al-Rahman who issued royal decree proclaiming Jews in Morocco were protected by justice under Moroccan law.

A very important development in 1862 is the creation of first school of the Alliance Israelite in Tetouan. The result of this school significantly increased the education level of Jews as the network spread across Morocco. This focus on education of the existing 200-250,000 Moroccan Jews is a major force in their historical value as a community. For example, in 1991 King Hassan II said to Moroccan Jews in a speech "You preceded the Arabs in Morocco, and you still stand out by a quality which distinguishes you in the cultural and religious fields. The Moroccan Talmudic School was universally recognized as the best in the world."

Feast of the throne, 1943: "I consider the Jews as Moroccan citizens with the same full and equal rights, as their Moslem brothers. Their property and their persons are inviolable. I am completely opposed to the new anti-semitic laws, and refuse to be associated with measures which I disapprove. I wish to inform you that, as in the past, the Jews remain under my protection, and I will not tolerate any discrimination between my subjects."

Moroccan independence from France greatly altered the Moroccan Jewish life. Anxiety over the future mounted among Jews. In 1955, a year before Moroccan independence, North African Jews represented 87% of new immigrants in Israel.

Even though the newly independent King Mohammad V declared in 1956 "The Jews

will enjoy every right, in complete equality, and be associated in every form of our national life, including responsibilities within the government", life dramatically changed for the Jews in Morocco. Several social, political and economic factors were conditions for a perfect storm:

Decolonization led to an economic vacuum by the French. A whole level of life had been economically dependent on the French and the balance of this life shifted dramatically adding anxiety to the Jewish population.

Arabization was one of the main objectives of the Nationalists. Remember that French had been the language of education, much culture, daily life and commerce for this generation. The Jewish elite, living outside of the Mellah, did not speak Arabic and this lack of communication led to more confusion and anxiety.

Hardening of the National Political Party was new to the Jews. Encouragement from Nasser and the Arab League led to many demonstrations against the French colonists. In addition, the Party was leaning to the Left with communist ideas and forging relations with Moscow. It was too dangerous to attack French Christian citizens so the Moroccan Jews became the invented symbol of colonization. Any kind of demonstration or riot ended up targeting Moroccan Jews.

After the Independence, King Mohammad V restricted emigration. The Jews were torn between the consequences and uncertainty of their future in Morocco and the illegal departure for a totally unknown life. Some chose to escape and one historical consequence was 1961 ship called the Pisces that sank killing all 43 Jews who had been smuggled aboard. This was an important event that politicized the Moroccan Jews. In 1962, upon the ascension of King Hassan II, Jews were allowed to emigrate. King Hassan told the community: ". . . I have recognized your rights as full-fledged Moroccan citizens. I request that you will be the ambassadors of Morocco wherever you may choose to emigrate and that you defend the reputation of your country whenever it is maligned by the media through bad faith or ignorance".

That was the first major Jewish exodus from Morocco. Two-thirds of that population left Morocco for Israel and Canada. The second exodus was in 1967 during the Six-Day War and the third was in 1973 during the Yom Kippur War.

This brings us to life today as a Moroccan Jew, both inside and outside the country. King Mohammad VI is a young and modern monarch who faces worldwide pressure. His legacy to follow is that of a peacemaker, often behind the scenes. His vision is to bring Morocco to a western level of development.

Although the population of Jews within Morocco has dwindled to approximately 3,000, there remains a vibrant community involved in many levels of society.

Although many of the Moroccan Jews have left, we still retain our unique blending of Judaism and Moroccan culture. This infusion is apparent in:

Religion: only Moroccan Jews pay homage to sainted Rabbis buried on Moroccan soil. These pilgrimages, "hiloulahs," involve a return to Morocco and a visit to the buried site which is tended and respected as well by Moroccan Muslims.

Weddings in Israel and Moroccan Jews worldwide are preceded by Hennas—typical of the Berber/Muslim religion. Also carrying of brides on "litters".

In conclusion, there is more to bring Moroccans together than to separate them. The single biggest threat to unity is extremism.

The United States needs to support Morocco in the strongest way to encourage their development as through the recent Trade Agreement and to help them fight the threat of terrorism. Through investment and development, there are promises to be a bright future.

As for Moroccan Jews who have emigrated, I think the words of Yitzhak Shamir sum it up: "Moroccan Jews were the only Jews that never renounced their country, nor were they rejected by their country".

THE WAR

HON. WM. LACY CLAY

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 19, 2007

Mr. CLAY. Madam Speaker, in the fall of 2002, I was among the majority of Democrats in the House of Representatives who voted against the Iraq war resolution. Claims about weapons of mass destruction had not been substantiated and there was no evidence that Saddam Hussein was linked to al Qaeda and the 9-11 attacks. I did not accept—as administration officials asserted—that the costs of the war and rebuilding of Iraq could be financed by Iraqi oil revenues. At that time, I told my colleagues that Iraq did not pose a direct threat to our national security and that we should concentrate our power on capturing Osama Bin Laden and destroying al Qaeda.

The invasion and occupation of Iraq has not achieved what its proponents promised. The war has degraded our military, undermined our nation's influence in the world, vitalized terrorists, and left the American people more vulnerable to attack than we were before the war.

Now, the National Intelligence Estimate confirms that while the administration vainly wrestles to salvage some semblance of victory in Iraq, Osama Bin Laden and his followers are poised for a resurgence. Al Qaeda's terrorist network, which was weakened but not destroyed after we invaded Afghanistan, never lost sight of its enemy. Today, al Qaeda poses as grave a threat to the United States as it did before 9-11.

As long as we remain in Iraq, al Qaeda will profit and the American people will pay the price. The security of our Nation demands that we withdraw from Iraq and use all of our military, intelligence and diplomatic resources to tear down the terrorist networks that want to destroy our way of life.

This Administration must stop blindly pandering to elitist dreams of rebuilding other nations in our image. Protecting the American people is a fundamental purpose of our government. The Iraq war is not advancing our national security; it is time to bring our troops home.

The Bush policy in Iraq has already cost the lives of over 3,600 brave Americans, with over 26,000 wounded. It has squandered and scattered resources that we should have devoted to our homeland security. And it has cost the U.S. citizens over half a trillion dollars in hard earned wages and lost Government services.

When history is written, it might say that we lost the first battle in the war against terrorism, but I pray it will not say that we lost the war.